

## Message Text

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12  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 SSC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 /083 W  
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P R 080922Z OCT 76  
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8875  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN  
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN  
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY OSLO  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK  
USMISSION USNATO  
USMISSION USUN  
AMCONSUL GOTEBOG BY POUCH

UNCLAS STOCKHOLM 5563

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAMH: PINT, SW  
SUBJECT: NEW SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTER APPOINTED

1. NEW SWEDISH PRIME MINISTER THORBJORN FALLDIN  
HAS NAMED SECOND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF HIS CENTER PARTY  
KARIN SODER AS HIS FOREIGN MINISTER. SODER IS  
THE FIRST WOMEN TO EVER HOLD THE POSITION AND IS  
SOMETHING OF A SURPRISE CHOICE. SPECULATION HAD  
BEEN THAT SHE WOULD BE APPOINTED SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
MINISTER.

2. KARIN SODER BECAME SECOND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF  
THE CENTER PARTY IN 1971, AT THE SAME TIME FALLDIN  
ASSUMED THE CHAIRMANSHIP. SHE AND FALLDIN HAVE  
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WORKED TOGETHER AT LEAST SINCE THEIR DAYS IN THE

CENTER PARTY YOUTH MOVEMENT, AND SHE IS INVOLVED IN MOST OF THE TOP-LEVEL DECISIONS WITHIN THE PARTY.

3. BORN IN 1928, SHE QUALIFIED AS AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER IN 1950 AND HAS LIVED IN THE STOCKHOLM AREA SINCE 1954. SHE STUDIED POLITICAL SCIENCE AND ECONOMICS IN 1963-64, AND IS PRESENTLY A CAREERS TEACHER IN HER LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT. SODER IS MARRIED AND HAS THREE CHILDREN. HER HUSBAND GUNNAR, A BUSINESSMAN, WAS ONE OF EX-CENTER PARTY LEADER HEDLUND'S CLOSEST ADVISORS, AND MAINTAINS INTIMATE CONTACT WITH THE CENTER PARTY LEADERSHIP.

4. A MEMBER OF THE RIKSDAG SINCE 1971, SODER HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT, THE FINANCE COMMITTEE, THE FOREIGN POLICY BOARD, AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE. PREVIOUSLY SHE WAS LARGELY ACTIVE IN PARTY AFFAIRS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PARTICULARLY IN HEALTH AND EDUCATION QUESTIONS. IN THE RIKSDAG, SHE HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY INFLUENTIAL IN THE AREAS OF EDUCATION, FAMILY POLICY, AND TAXATION POLICY AND HAS A REPUTATION FOR BEING A TOUGH AND ENERGETIC LEGISLATOR.

5. SODER APPARENTLY SPEAKS ENGLISH AND PROBABLY ANOTHER LANGUAGE, SINCE FIRST CHOICE FOR THE POST, FIRST VICE-CHAIRMAN JOHANNES ANTONSSON (WHO WAS APPOINTED MINISTER OF COMMUNES) DECLINED PRIMARILY ON GROUNDS OF HIS DIFFICULTY WITH LANGUAGES. AS ONE WHOSE PRIMARY INTERESTS HAVE BEEN IN AREAS OTHER THAN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SODER'S VIEWS ON FOREIGN POLICY ARE AS YET UNCERTAIN, EVEN TO THOSE IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** NEW SWEDISH FOREIGN MINISTER APPOINTED  
**TAGS:** PINT, SW, (SODER, KARIN)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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